

Questions to Consider & Issues to Discuss with your Partner Agency

☐ **Liability:**

If a student gets injured, who is responsible?

- *Is it the site where the Roadmap is being presented (e.g. the community center, the school)?*
- *The partner (e.g. Girl Scouts, Central School)?*
- *The AmeriCorps site (e.g. Intergenerational Innovations, EarthCorps etc.)?*

Most partner agencies have a policy about this and all should have liability insurance. Generally speaking, since you are on their site, working with their group of youth, their policy covers their youth. By inviting you in and condoning your activities, they are accepting liability. Below are some general guidelines for different agencies, but you should definitely talk to your specific partner agency about liability up front, so that you know ahead of time what the rules are. This is not to frighten you or them—it is just to make sure that everyone is on the same page from the beginning.

- **Boys and Girls Club:** Generally, the Boys and Girls Clubs have parents of their youth members sign liability waivers and permission slips when they join and for each special event (like a service project). Talk to them about permission slips for your service project.
- **Camp Fire:** All parents or guardians sign a waiver when their child joins. Camp Fire should cover activities as long as safety precautions are taken. Talk to them up front and before your service project just to be sure.
- **Schools:** If you are leading CE as part of a class at the school or as a school-sanctioned after school program, your activities should be covered by the school's liability policy. Ask someone in the administration at the beginning of the program if waivers or permission forms are needed from parents, especially regarding the service project.
- **YMCA/YWCA:** Each YMCA or YWCA has its own insurance, and, therefore, its own liability policies. Ask the Human Resources Manager at your YMCA/YWCA.
- **Girl Scouts:** Girl Scouts are covered by an insurance fee included in their membership. That insurance should cover any accidents as long as the injury did not result from something exceedingly reckless like cliff diving. But check this out anyway, just to make sure.

☐ **Transportation:**

If transportation to the service site is necessary, who will provide it? Does the school have a van and someone to drive it? Is there money to rent a bus or pay for the kids to take the bus? Can parents give their kids a ride? AmeriCorps members should not be driving children around in their cars. Talk this out early with your partner agency so that, if you find that there is no way to transport youth to a service site, you can choose one that is within walking distance or on a bus route.

☐ **Discipline:**

If a student seriously misbehaves, what is the protocol and who is responsible? Are you allowed to send a child home if necessary? What does the school or partner agency usually do in severe cases? Make sure you know their rules and that yours are consistent with theirs. Will there be somebody from the partner agency in the room with you while you facilitate? If so, which of you is responsible for maintaining discipline and taking care of problems?

☐ **Permission Forms:**

Many activities (often including transportation off-site) require parental permission forms according to the agency. Find out if you need one for what you are doing, and check with your partner agency to see if they have forms you can use or if this has already been taken care of. Also, consider photo permission forms in case you want to invite the newspaper to photograph your service project—some parents do not want their children’s photograph used for promotional purposes.

☐ **Supplies:**

Who will be responsible for the supplies you will be using? If your partner agency has access to many of the supplies you need, can you use them for this project? For the other supplies, is your team responsible for buying them or will the partner agency? They may have a budget for this sort of thing. Think of other community partners for your service project who might have supplies (e.g. You and the Girl Scouts want to clean a park—talk with Parks and Rec.), and consider asking them (Parks and Rec.) if they want to join your project and your celebration as well. They might be willing to donate prizes or buy food. Plus, you’ll build partnerships! Also, there may be sources of outside funding as well, both locally and at the state and national level.

☐ **Schedule:**

Make sure you and your partner agency are on the same page about the time and place for all the activities. Let them know the timeline, and keep them informed about which activities will be done on which days.

Good communication with your partner agency can make the difference in the success of your CE program!